

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 DHA-02 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ORM-01

PC-01 /085 W

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R 021415Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8045

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABERONES

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BLANTYRE 0782

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: VIEWS OF DR. ELLIOT GABELLAH

1. SUMMARY: DURING CALL AT EMBASSY JULY 2 DR. ELLIOT GABELLAH DESCRIBED LATEST MOVES TOWARD RHODESIA CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE AND EFFORTS TO UNIFY ANC LEADERSHIP. GABELLAH ADVISED HE IS TRAVELLING TO U.S. ABOUT JULY 5 INTER ALIA TO ENLIST AMERICAN SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE DURING FUTURE PERIOD OF TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA. GABELLAH STRESSED NEED FOR ANC UNITY AND INDICATED LUSAKA MEETING IS SHORTLY TO BE CONVENED UNDER KAUNDA'S AUSPICES TO PRESS FOR GREATER COHESION AMONG TOP ANC LEADERS. GABELLAH'S OWN VIEW WAS THAT FURTHER PROGRESS WITH SMITH IS ONLY POSSIBLE WHEN SMITH IS FACED WITH CLEAR ANC UNITY. END SUMMARY.

2. DR. ELLIOT GABELLAH CALLED ON AMBASSADOR AT OWN REQUEST JULY 2 - FIRST TIME HE HAS CALLED AT THIS EMBASSY. HE ADVISED
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THAT HE IS TRAVELLING TO WASHINGTON VIA NEW YORK AND LONDON ABOUT

JULY 5. HIS SCHEDULE INCLUDES COMMITMENTS WITH AME CHURCH IN WASHINGTON JULY 5-7 AFTER WHICH HE REQUESTED EMBASSY ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING MEETING WITH STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS TO WHOM "WE HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY". SPECIFICALLY, GABELLAH SAID, ANC WISHED TO SEEK US SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE DURING TRANSITION PERIOD BETWEEN CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE AND BLACK MAJORITY RULE. IN ADDITION TO MEDICAL AND HUMANITARIAN HELP, GABELLAH STRESSED EDUCATIONAL AID "TO HELP INSURE WE ARE READY FOR MAJORITY RULE". GABELLAH ADDED THAT ANC IS LOOKING TO U.S. AND WEST FOR HELP AND EXPRESSED OPINION THAT COMMUNIST THEORY IS FOREIGN TO AVERAGE RHODESIAN AFRICAN TO WHOM PERSONAL POSSESSION OF PROPERTY IS IMPORTANT; THEREFORE ANC WISHED TO RECEIVE AID FROM COUNTRIES ABLE TO ASSIST DEVELOPMENT BASED ON CONCEPT OF INDIVIDUAL OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY. IN COMPARISON HE CITED EXPERIENCE IN TANZANIA WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS "FAILURE" SINCE AVERAGE AFRICAN THERE DID NOT NATURALLY ACCEPT SOCIALIST THEORIES ON WHICH DEVELOPMENT BEING BASED. WE AGREED ALERT WASHINGTON TO GABELLAH'S DESIRE FOR TALKS DURING JULY 8-12 PERIOD. HE COULD NOT PROVIDE SPECIFIC ADDRESS AT WHICH HE COULD BE REACHED IN WASHINGTON BUT WOULD APPRECIATE DEPT. CONTACTING AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL HEADQUARTERS TO ARRANGE MEETING.

3. CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE. GABELLAH DESCRIBED SMITH AS STILL WORKING FROM POSITION OF FEAR OF WHITE CONSTITUENTS. SMITH CONTINUES MAINTAIN THAT AS RHODESIA IS FULLY INDEPENDENT AND SELF-GOVERNING, ANY TALKS SHOULD BE HELD IN RHODESIA BETWEEN ANC AND RHODESIA GOVERNMENT. ANC FOR ITS PART MAINTAINED TALKS OUTSIDE RHODESIA ARE NECESSARY TO ALLOW FULL PARTICIPATION OF ANC MEMBERS WHO COULD NOT RETURN UNLESS SMITH ENDED STATE OF EMERGENCY AND DECLARED FULL AMNESTY. IN EXAMPLE, GABELLAH CITED GUERRILLA GROUP LEADERS WHO, IF NOT INVOLVED IN AND BOUND BY DECISIONS OF CONFERENCE, MIGHT TURN AGAINST ANC AS WELL AS SMITH. ANC HAD NOW PROPOSED THAT CONFERENCE TAKE PLACE IN VENUES FRIENDLY TO SMITH SUCH AS PRETORIA, LESOTHO OR MALAWI. ALTERNATIVELY CONFERENCE COULD TAKE PLACE IN RHODESIA IF STATE OF EMERGENCY SUSPENDED, GENERAL AMNESTY DECLARED AND ALL LEADERS BOTH WITHIN AND WITHOUT COUNTRY FREE TO PARTICIPATE. GABELLAH SAID SMITH STILL HAD NOT AGREED TO ANY OF THESE PROPOSALS.

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4. KEY TO FURTHER PROGRESS WITH SMITH, GABELLAH SAID, IS STRENGTHENING OF ANC UNITY. KNOMO'S POSITION WITHIN THE ANC HAD BEEN BADLY HURT BY SMITH'S PUBLIC REFERENCE TO NKOMO AS REASONABLE MAN WITH WHOM SMITH COULD WORK. SAID SMITH MAY HAVE SOUGHT TO REASSURE WHITES BY THESE TACTICS BUT RUMORS OF SMITH/NKOMO SECRET MEETINGS ONLY CAUSED AFRICANS TO QUESTION NKOMO'S LOYALTY TO ANC AND HIS PERSONAL AMBITIONS. GABELLAH SAID HE HAD COUNSELED NKOMO TO MAKE A MORE OR LESS DEFIANT

PUBLIC STATEMENT DENOUNCING IMPLICATIONS OF SMITH'S STATEMENT.
ISSUE OF ANC UNITY NOW IS TO BE ADDRESSED AT A MEETING OF
ANC LEADERS BEING CALLED BY PRESIDENT KAUNDA IN LUSAKA, PERHAPS
IN NEXT FEW DAYS DEPENDING ON HOW LONG IT TAKES TO ROUND UP
SITHOLE AND OTHERS. HOPEFULLY RECONCILIATION OF VARIOUS FACTIONS
AND PERSONALITIES COULD BE BROUGHT ABOUT BY REALIZATION THAT
ONLY UNITY CAN PREVENT SMITH FROM ADHERING TO PRESENT STUBBORN
LINE. IN FURTHER EXAMPLE, GABELLAH MENTIONED CONVERSATION HE
HAD HELD WITH MACHEL DURING MOZAMBIQUE INDEPENDENCE CELEB-
RATIONS DURING WHICH MACHEL SAID FRELIIMO HELP WOULD BE GIVEN
ONLY TO STRONGLY UNITED ANC AND NOT TO ANY FACTIONS THEREOF.
MACHEL REPORTEDLY

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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BLANTYRE 0782

OBSERVED THAT HE DOES NOT WANT ANOTHER ANGOLA SITUATION IN
RHODESIA. GABELLAH ADDED A NUMBER OF ZANU AND ZAPU PERSONAL-
ITIES, INCLUDING ROBERT MUGABE, ARE STILL IN MACHEL'S PRISONS
SINCE THEY REPRESENTED THEMSELVES AS FACTIONAL LEADERS RATHER
THAN ANC. GABELLAH FREELY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT LEVEL AND NATURE
OF FACTIONALLY-COMMITTED CRIMES, PARTICULARLY IN ZAMBIA AND

WITHIN ZANU, WERE BOTH HORRIFYING TO BEHOLD AND PROVIDED SMITH'S DIE-HARD SUPPORTERS WITH BEST EVIDENCE THAT ANC IS FAR FROM UNITED.

5. IN ADDITION TO PRIORITY TO UNITY OF ANC, GABELLAH SAID CONTINUING EMPHASIS BEING GIVEN TO "DRIVING WEDGES" BETWEEN SMITH AND VORSTER WHOSE RESIDUAL BACKING STILL PERMITS SMITH TO BELIEVE SITUATION IS NOT YET URGENT ENOUGH TO REQUIRE COMPROMISE. AS EXAMPLE HE CITED ANC OFFER TO HOLD CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE IN PRETORIA. GABELLAH HAD LITTLE TO SAY OF RECENT ENNALS VISIT TO RHODESIA OTHER THAN TO COMMEND ENNALS FOR FLEXIBILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO LISTEN. HIS REACTION TO RECENT VISIT OF
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WHITE CONSERVATIVE RHODESIANS TO ZAMBIA (LUSAKA 1204) WAS POSITIVE BUT RESTRAINED.

6. WHILE IN MALAWI GABELLAH MET WITH MINISTER OF STATE MUWALO AND WAS ESCORTED, INCLUDING TO EMBASSY, BY MINEXTAFF OFFICIAL. GABELLAH SAID HE EXPECTED MEET WITH PRESIDENT BANDA ON RETURN TRIP FOR US ON OR ABOUT JULY 15 AND WOULD AGAIN CALL AT EMBASSY.

7. GABELLAH WAS MOST ARTICULATE, CANDID AND LOGICAL IN THIS OUR FIRST MEETING, AND IMPRESSED US AS A MUCH STRONGER CHARACTER THAN MUZOREWA (WHOSE POSITIONS, HOWEVER, HE FULLY SUPPORTS) AND A MUCH MORE STABLE PERSONALITY THAN NDABANINGI SITHOLE. GABELLAH'S DESCRIPTION OF ANC DESIRE FOR MORE MEANINGFUL CONTACT WITH AND SUPPORT FROM US AND WEST IS CONSISTENT WITH SEMENT EXPRESSED EARLIER TO ME BY BISHOP MUZOREWA. HIS APPEAL THAT US COME TO ASSISTANCE OF AFRICAN RHODESIANS IN TRANSITIONAL PERIOD INDICATES BOTH THAT FORWARD THINKING AND PLANNING ARE BEING UNDERTAKEN AND THAT ANC LEADERS ARE CONFIDENT OF EVENTUAL OUTCOME. HOWEVER, CLEAR RECOGNITION OF NEED FIRST FOR ANC UNITY AND EXPANDED PRESSURE ON SMITH INCLUDING BY SOUTH AFRICA INDICATES ANC APPRECIATION OF REALITIES OF PRESENT SITUATION. IF A SUCCESSFUL CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE EVENTUALLY TRANSPiRES RESULTING IN A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT IT SEEMS TO US THAT U.S. ASSISTANCE AT SUCH TIME (EG. PEACE CORPS, USAID) COULD BE TREMENDOUSLY HELPFUL AND WOULD BE WELL RECEIVED BY ALL RHODESIANS. STEVENSON

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